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Friday, July 29, 2011

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# The Western News

Serving the communities of Libby and Troy since 1902

www.thewesternnews.com

Libby, Montana

Volume 110, No. 60

## IN BRIEF

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## DEATHS

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## Libby

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Bull-riding, bareback broncos, saddle-broncos, and the four timed-events — tie-down roping, barrel racing, steer wrestling and team roping. The eighth event will be the "Hometown Barrel Racing," in which young cowgirls will compete beginning immediately after the main rodeo events.

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See RODEO, Page 6

## Libby

# Cancer survivor/Early detection is key



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See RELAY, Page 6

## Lincoln County

# Unemployment rate increases to 15 percent

County leads Montana for rate, which is twice the state average

Alan Lewis Gerstenecker

Editor  
Lincoln County unemployment figures for June indicate a slight increase from 14.9 to 15 percent, indicating the county still leads all of Montana's counties with the highest jobless rate. Sanders County trails Lincoln County by just one-tenth of 1 percent, at 14.9 percent. In Lincoln County, the labor force, which consists of 8,279 people, includes 7,040 employed and 1,239 who are unemployed. State figures indicate 7.3 percent of all Montanans are jobless, compared to 9.1 percent nationally. The figures indicate Lincoln County has more than twice the jobless rate of the rest of the state. The Research and Analysis Bureau of the Montana Department of Labor and Industry said the national economy and slowing federal investments in recovery projects continues to affect Montana, with the state's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increasing slightly by 0.2 to 7.5 percent. Despite the uptick in the unemployment rate for the month, Montana's economy remains on the path to recovery, with about 3,000 jobs added in the last quarter, according to the state agency. National figures also indicate slower job

See JOBS, Page 6

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# Tester asks EPA director about Rainy Creek contamination

Water tests 40-plus times the recommended amount

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In the second letter in as many weeks to the Administrator of the EPA, Sen. Jon Tester is pressuring the agency for information about the announced contamination of Rainy Creek, a point EPA officials meeting with Lincoln County Commissioners revealed last week. In the most recent letter dated

July 25 to EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson, Tester reminds her of the letter detailing concerns of the contaminated wood chips on Port Authority property sent last week and also mentions data EPA Spokeswoman Rebecca Thomas revealed to county commissioners about asbestos contamination in Rainy Creek.

During the meeting last week, Thomas told Commissioners Rainy Creek has "285 million (asbestos) fibers per liter." She acknowledged the maximum toxic levels of asbes-

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said Tester, a Democrat. "I'm going to stay on them so we can move in the other direction where folks in Libby can finally get answers instead of just more questions." During that meeting, EPA representatives relayed that asbestos levels could be even higher elsewhere in the creek. "This disturbing series of reports raises further questions about the health and wellbeing of Libby resi-

See EPA, Page 2

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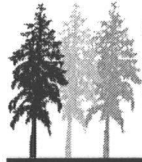
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